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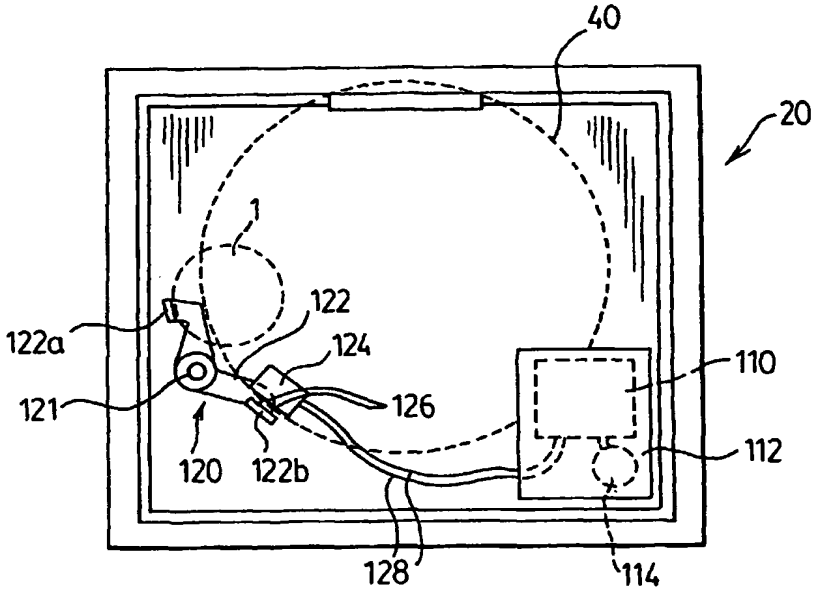
(54) Title: A TRACKING SYSTEM FOR VENDING MACHINES



(57) Abstract: A tracking system counts events in the operation of multiple machines or devices over a wide geographic area. For example, for bulk venders the system counts each vend responsive to rotation through a cycle of the coin mechanism, and preferably records the date and time of each vend. An active tag has a memory for storing data representing a vending event, for example the date and time of the event. The data is periodically read by an interrogator, which downloads the data stored in the tag memory and erases the memory to reset the tag for continued monitoring of the vender. With this information an operator can reconcile revenues, track when sales take place and over what period of time, and track the work habits of service personnel.

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